

American Association of Critical-Care Nurses recognizes the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at the Durham VA Health Care System with gold Beacon Award for Excellence

National three-year award with gold, silver, bronze designations marks a significant milestone on the path to exceptional patient care and achieving a healthy work environment.

DURHAM, N.C. — The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN), Aliso Viejo, Calif., recently conferred a gold-level Beacon Award for Excellence on the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at the Durham VA Health Care System, Durham, NC.

The Beacon Award for Excellence — a significant milestone on the path to exceptional patient care and healthy work environments — recognizes unit caregivers who successfully improve patient outcomes and align practices with AACN’s six Healthy Work Environment Standards. Units that achieve this three-year, three-level award with gold, silver or bronze designations meet national criteria consistent with Magnet Recognition, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the National Quality Healthcare Award.

AACN President Clareen Wiencek, RN, PhD, ACNP, ACHPN, applauds the commitment of the caregivers at the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at the Durham VA Health Care System for working together to meet and exceed the high standards set forth by the Beacon Award for Excellence. These dedicated healthcare professionals join other members of the exceptional community of nurses who set the standard for optimal patient care.

“The Beacon Award for Excellence recognizes caregivers in stellar units whose consistent and systematic approach to evidence-based care optimizes patient outcomes. Units that receive this national recognition serve as role models to others on their journey to excellent patient and family care,” she explains.

The gold-level Beacon Award for Excellence earned by the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at the Durham VA Health Care System signifies excellent and sustained unit performance and patient outcomes. The Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at the Durham VA Health Care System earned a gold award by meeting the following evidence-based Beacon Award for Excellence criteria:

- Leadership Structures and Systems
- Appropriate Staffing and Staff Engagement
- Effective Communication, Knowledge Management, Learning and Development
- Evidence-Based Practice and Processes
- Outcome Measurement

Other Beacon Award designations include bronze and silver. Recipients who earn a bronze-level award demonstrate success in developing, deploying and integrating unit-based performance criteria for optimal outcomes; silver-level awardees demonstrate continuous learning and effective systems to achieve optimal patient care.

AACN honors the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at the Durham VA Health Care System and other Beacon Award for Excellence recipients with announcements in AACN Bold Voices, the monthly award-winning member magazine distributed to more than 100,000 acute and critical care nurses nationwide. AACN also honors awardees at the National Teaching Institute & Critical Care Exposition (NTI), the world's largest educational conference and trade show for nurses who care for acutely and critically ill patients and their families.

About the Beacon Award for Excellence: Established in 2003, the Beacon Award for Excellence offers a road map to help guide exceptional care through improved outcomes and greater overall patient satisfaction. U.S. or Canadian units where patients receive their principal nursing care after hospital admission qualify for this excellence award. Units that receive the Beacon Award for Excellence meet criteria in six categories: leadership structures and systems; appropriate staffing and staff engagement; effective communication, knowledge management, learning and development; evidence-based practice and processes; and outcome measurement. To learn more, visit www.aacn.org/beacon or call (800) 899-2226.

About the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses: Founded in 1969 and based in Aliso Viejo, Calif., the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) is the largest specialty nursing organization in the world. AACN joins together the interests of more than 500,000 acute and critical care nurses and claims more than 235 chapters worldwide. The organization's vision is to create a healthcare system driven by the needs of patients and their families in which acute and critical care nurses make their optimal contribution. To learn more about AACN, visit www.aacn.org, connect with the organization on Facebook at www.facebook.com/aacnface or follow AACN on Twitter at www.twitter.com/aacnme.

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